

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-14, and 16-29 remain in the application with claims 1-4 and 11-14 having been amended hereby and claims 5 and 15 having been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of the claims under 35 USC 103, as being unpatentable over Ruane et al. and Imai et al.

As previously stated, the present invention relates to a network system having a plurality of network segments. Process portions are provided for information processing and to connect the various network segments. A so-called group is formed when the process portions connect one or more of the network segments. In such a group, only one process portion can be in a first state and all other process portions must be in a second state. A second group would be determined by exchanging messages between the first-state process portion of the first group and a first-state process portion of the second group. A third group would consist of process portions of the first group and process portions of the second group, wherein the process portion determined as the only one to be the first-state process portion remains in the first state and all other process portions not so determined are changed into the second state.

The claims have been amended hereby to emphasize the above-noted features of the present invention.

In Ruane et al., a method is provided to determine

whether two network units are connected directly to each other. Communication network equipment drivers are provided that control the devices connected to the network based upon commands and requests and responses.

Imai et al. is cited for its showing of a system for adding identifying portions to request messages. A server stores the identification information in a specialized storage area that is not destroyed when a defect takes place in a network. On the other hand, if a defect does take place a backup server is provided to take over upon accessing the stored identification information.

It is respectfully submitted that even combining Imai et al. with Ruane et al., that a system such as the present invention in which process portions are provided for connecting network segments and in which only one first-state process portion is present in any group and if two groups are provided still only one first-state process portion is provided.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Ruane et al. nor Imai et al. show or suggest any such network system as recited in the amended claims.

Therefore, in view of the amendments made to the claims hereby, as well as the above remarks, it is respectfully submitted that a network system having a plurality of network segments connected by process portions, as taught by the present invention and as recited in the amended claims, is neither shown nor suggested in the cited references, alone or

in combination.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay H. Maioli". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jay H. Maioli
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